

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The drive mechanism (10) has a drive member (12) and a flexible conveying member (14). The engaging elements (12b) of the drive member (12) have an engaging element spacing (t1), while the associated counter elements (14b) of the conveyor member 14 have a counter element spacing (t2).

According to the invention the engaging element spacing (t1) of the engaging elements (12b) is larger than the counter element spacing (t2) of the counter elements (14b) of the conveying member in order to compensate for conveyor member stretching in operation. In a preferred embodiment the conveying member is a flexible conveyor chain and the drive member (12) is a toothed drive wheel. In another preferred embodiment the ratio of the engaging element spacing (t1) of the drive member (12) to the counter element spacing (t2) of the conveying member (14) is between about 1.01 and about 1.10.